



SESSION 3

Make Room for a Miracle



Last week we took a look at a somewhat humorous episode in Jesus' life when four guys showed up with their friend on a stretcher planning to get him to Jesus for healing. Since the house was full (the phrase Mark uses is "there was no room"), the four took their friend up on the roof, figured out where Jesus was in the house, cut a hole in the flat roof above His head, and lowered their friend in front of Jesus. It's hard not

to chuckle when we realize that we may have to do some odd lifting and tearing off some roofs too before we are going to make room for what God wants to do in our lives. But it may be more like flipping a switch! In this session we want to face the fact that we may not see miracles in our lives because we haven't made room for one!

COMING TOGETHER

During each session, we begin with a question or brief activity designed to "put us on the same page" for the session.

1 As you can tell from the title of this session, we're going to be talking about miracles. This may or may not be a comfortable subject for you. But to ease into our conversation, let's just talk about things you've witnessed, experienced, or heard about that fit in the general category of miracles. Any examples?

2 For those who might be joining us for the first time this session, who would like to describe one significant discovery you've made in the first two sessions that is already making a difference in your life?

3 Rotating leaders is one of the group values we highly recommend for your group. People need opportunities to experiment with ways in which God may have gifted them. Your group will give you all the encouragement you need before, during, and after the session.

We also suggest you rotate host homes, with the host of each meeting providing the refreshments. Some groups like to let the host lead the meeting each week, while others like to let one person host while another person leads.

The Small Group Calendar on page 90 is a tool for planning who will host and lead each meeting. Take a few minutes to plan hosts and leaders for your remaining meetings. Don't pass this up! It will revolutionize your group.



LEARNING TOGETHER

Throughout the sessions in Make Room we're hearing some pointed teaching from Greg and Josh Surratt as well as some personal stories from people who have been discovering the amazing things that happen when we begin to make room for God and His plans. The very idea of



the miraculous may seem a little odd to us, but for this session, let's suspend judgment and focus on God. If He is God, then by definition He wouldn't have any difficulty doing things we would have to call miracles. It's His show. If He wanted to create a miracle in your life, would you really tell Him to hold off? With that possibility in mind, let's begin Greg's teaching for this session:



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Use the space provided below for any notes, questions, or comments you want to bring up in the discussion later.

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GROWING TOGETHER

In the questions that follow, you will review and expand on the teaching you just experienced.

4 Since we've already talked about the matter of making room for God in our lives, is it possible to keep from including the possibility of miracles when God is present? Why or why not?

5 In the passage from Mark 5:21-34 and based on how the woman acted, how would you describe her view of miracles?

6 Like the lame man from last week, what did the woman go away with from her encounter with Jesus beyond the miracle she was hoping for?

7 Greg's first teaching point was that making room for a miracle in our lives will require us to remember that with God we may be down but we're not out. Why is this so important?

8 Greg's second point was about our needing to understand that God always does the heavy lifting. What did he mean? How did the "flipping the light switch" illustration help you?

9 Greg included a third point that relates to the subject of our last session: God cares deeply about bringing healing, but He cares even more about relationships. How does this statement reflect your understanding of what it means to be in relationship with God?





GOING DEEPER BIBLE STUDY

You can explore the following Bible passages behind the teaching for this session as a group (if there is time) or on your own between sessions.

Read Matthew 19:16-26. Jesus lived out His life in an extremely religious environment. People were busy trying to please God and deeply frustrated by their inability to feel they had done enough. That concern was on the mind of the rich, young ruler who approached Jesus with the question: “Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?”

In the opening dialog between the rich man and Jesus, the Lord specified six commandments when asked. Which four did He leave out? (see Exodus 20:3-17)



What kind of room was Jesus trying to get this man to create in his life?



What occurrence was Jesus referring to when He said, “with God all things are possible” (v.26)?

Read John 9:1-12. When we are thinking about making room for a miracle in our lives one of the temptations is to remember all the occasions when we wish we could have experienced a miracle, but nothing happened.

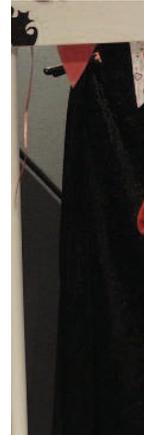


Perhaps someone we loved died unexpectedly. Or we were treated unfairly. Or someone was hurt unjustly. And we wonder where God was when that was going on. Greg's second point about God's presence meaning we may be down but not out may sometimes not ring true. This tension may well have been on the disciples' minds as they watched the man born blind and then asked Jesus their question.

The disciples assumed that the man had suffered his fate because someone had sinned. How did Jesus answer their assumption with another possibility?

Note how this man's understanding of Jesus gradually increased: see vs. 11, 17, 25, 33, 38. The woman in the earlier story suffered twelve years; this man had been born blind, but what does their experience tell us about the way God actually works?

How does making room for a miracle help us face the difficulties of life with endurance and grace?



SHARING TOGETHER

Now it's time to make some personal applications to all we've been thinking about in the last few minutes.

10 One of Greg's last comments was, "You need to make room for God at the point of your greatest need." What kind of miracle, big or small, would you love to see the Lord do and how can you make room for them even this week?

11 How can the rest of the group be praying for you this week as you seek to give yourself more fully to God and the possibility of miracles in your life?



12 Now let's respond to Greg's closing question, listening to one another and agreeing to be in prayer for the matters we're about to hear. What kind of miracle, big or small, would you love to see the Lord do and how can you make room for them even this week?

Who did you identify?

Is this someone you'd feel comfortable inviting to our Small Group?

Are there other ways you could build a relationship with them?

Is this someone you could share your faith with?

GOING TOGETHER

During these sessions we are doing things “together:” learning, thinking, growing, praying, choosing, etc. Part of being together is how we live when we aren’t together. Here are some questions to clarify our shared purposes until we meet again.



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13 When you think of your present relationship with Christ, how can the rest of the group be praying for you this week as you seek to give yourself more fully to God’s plan that always includes the possibility of miracles in your life?

14 In the last session we asked you to write some names in the Circles of Life diagram. Who did you identify as the people in your life who need to meet Jesus? Go back to the Circles of Life diagram on page 36 to help you think of the various people you come in contact with on a regular basis who need to know Jesus more deeply. Consider the following ideas for action and make a plan to follow through on one of them this week.

This is a wonderful time to welcome a few friends into your group. Which of the people you listed could you invite? It’s possible that you may need to help your friend overcome obstacles to coming to a place where he or she can encounter Jesus. Does your friend



need a ride to the group? Help with child care?

Consider inviting a friend to attend a weekend service with you and possibly plan to enjoy a meal together afterward. This can be a great opportunity to talk with someone about your faith in Jesus.

Is there someone who might not want to join your group but who still needs a connection? Would you be willing to have lunch or coffee with that person, catch up on life, and share something you've learned from this study? Jesus doesn't call all of us to lead small groups, but He does call every disciple to spiritually multiply his or her life over time.

Close the session in prayer. Encourage each other to pray audibly for others in the group.



DAILY REFLECTIONS

These are daily reviews of the key Bible verses and related others that will help you think about and apply the insights from this session.

Day 1 – John 3:3

The Birth Miracle

In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.”

“Born again” has become a cliché in our culture, but what reality was Jesus really talking about and how have you experienced it?

Day 2 – Ephesians 4:15-16

Body Miracle

“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”

In what ways do you think the church is a continual miracle?

Day 3 – Matthew 19:26

The Impossible Parachute

“Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

What or who are you tempted to give up on? What do Jesus’ words mean to you today?

Day 4 - Hebrews 12:2-3

When We're Down

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."

If the miracle doesn't seem to come quickly enough, how can these verses from Hebrews encourage you?

Day 5 - John 16:1, 33

Lovingly Warned

"All this I have told you so that you will not go astray.... I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

In what ways do these verses help you deepen your understanding that following Jesus is for a lifetime and beyond?

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WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible"(Matthew 19:26 NIV) .